

In this paper Dr. Stieda shows, from a study of the histology and development, that the central substance of the follicles of this peculiar organ is composed of, and derived from, the epithelium of the "hind gut." The bursa Fabricii, therefore, can neither be a secreting gland, nor can it be compared to a Peyer's patch, as has been done by some previous authors. He has no additional information to give as to its function in birds, but suggests a comparison with another problematical organ, the thymus gland.

XIV.—*Letters, Extracts, Announcements, &c.*

We have received the following letters addressed to the Editors of 'The Ibis':—

SIRS,—In Part xi. of his 'Birds of New Guinea' (which has just reached me) Mr. Gould says that we do not know the exact part of the island of Celebes from where *Gymnophaps pæcilorrhoea* (Brügg.) comes. He supposes that it is "probably from the south-eastern portion of the island, where Dr. Fischer collected." Now Dr. Fischer only collected in the northern portion of Celebes, viz. the Minahassa; and the specimen described by Dr. Brüggeman as *Carpophaga pæcilorrhoea* (Abh. naturw. Ver. Bremen, v. p. 85, 1876) was actually collected there. A short time afterwards Herr von Pelzeln described and figured (Verh. zool.-bot. Ges. Wien, xxvi. p. 720, pl. xiii. 1876) a specimen of the same species as *Gymnophaps pæcilorrhoea*; this one was sent to the Vienna Museum by Dr. von Drasche, who had procured on the Philippines a collection of bird-skins from various localities of the East. An exact habitat was not attached to the specimen; but I suppose it was from North Celebes, as the Menilla traders mostly only go there. Lastly, the Dresden Museum got the specimen which Mr. Gould has figured, from Mr. van Musschenbroek, who had killed it near Menado, as the label attached to the bird proves. Therefore the habitat of *Gymnophaps pæcilorrhoea* (Brügg.) is not doubtful: it is North Celebes; and the bird has not yet been recorded from

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South Celebes. This only proves that, even after much collecting in the Minahassa, new species still remain to be discovered in that interesting part of the globe.

This last remark also applies to *Ptilopus fischeri*, Brügg. The typical specimen described and figured by Dr. Brüggemann (*l. c.* p. 82, pl. iv.) was collected by Dr. Fischer in the Minahassa. Subsequently the Leiden Museum got a series of specimens from South Celebes, which Prof. Schlegel immediately recognized as of a new species, as he told me, not yet knowing of Brüggemann's paper. To this series belongs the Dresden specimen, which Mr. Gould has figured in the same part of his 'Birds of New Guinea.' *Ptilopus fischeri*, Brügg., therefore is known from North and South Celebes, and Mr. Gould's supposition, that it is possibly confined to Southern Celebes alone, does not hold good; neither do I share Dr. Brüggemann's view (*l. c.* p. 84) that it only went astray to Menado.

I am, yours, &c.,

A. B. MEYER.

Royal Zoological Museum, Dresden,
October 25th, 1880.

SIRS,—When in Sydney, at the commencement of last year, I inspected, in the cabinets of Mr. Macleay, at his Museum, in Elizabeth Bay, a *Pachycephala*, marked by Mr. Ramsay, in his own handwriting, *Pachycephala kandavensis*; and I pointed out to the Curator that this was the true *P. vitiensis* of Gray. Mr. Masters informed me that the bird had been purchased from my old servant Pierce, who had collected it in Kandavu (Fiji), and that it had been inspected and labelled by Mr. Ramsay.

I saw Pierce's collection on his return from Kandavu, and, at his request, labelled all the specimens with a slip of paper under the wing. I particularly remember this species, as previously I had mistaken the narrow-collared pale yellow-throated species for *P. vitiensis*, and was proportionately pleased to find the true species, and the only white-throated species in Fiji. Mr. Masters was at once convinced of the justness of my identification, and altered the label.

I find, however, that the error has gone further, and that Mr. Ramsay, in the first volume of the 'Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales,' p. 65, has perpetuated it, by describing this bird as a new species! It is a pity that, before "rushing into print," Mr. Ramsay had not consulted me, knowing, as he did, that I had been working so long at the Fijian ornith.

The same sort of error seems to have occurred in the *Merula* from the same locality, which I pointed out and labelled as *Merula bicolor*, Layard, *having expressly sent Pierce to Kandavu to procure it for Mr. Ramsay*, but which the latter, ignoring my label and information, has renamed *M. ruficeps*, P. L. S. N. S. W. vol. i. p. 43. In the same paper *Vitia ruficapilla*, Ramsay, is described. This I *also labelled as having been sent home to Dr. Finsch*, who was then describing it in Europe under the name of *Drymochera badiceps*.

E. L. LAYARD.

Noumea, June 25th, 1880.

SIRS,—We have to chronicle two bits of ornithological information that may be deemed not unworthy the pages of 'The Ibis.'

First, four specimens of that very rare bird *Campephaga analis*, Verr. et Des Murs (Revue Zoologique, 1860), have been purchased in the market; and one has been presented to me by my liberal friend M. Savés, in the flesh.

Messieurs Verreaux and Des Murs had only one example, a young bird, before them when they described the species. M. Marie, although he includes it in his list (*cf.* Ibis, 1877, p. 362), never saw it, as appears from the omission of the (*), which, he says, in his paper published in the 'Actes de la Société Linnéenne de Bourdeaux,' t. xxvii. 1870, he affixed to all the species which passed through his hands. We have been here over four years; and these are the first specimens we have seen. We therefore look on it as one of our rarest species.

Our specimen is a ♀; but the sexes are undistinguishable in colour. It measures in the flesh 11 inches, wing 5.416,

tail 5·5, tarse 1·25, bill 1. It is throughout of a uniform cinereous colour, darkest on the wing- and tail-feathers. Vent, under tail-coverts, inner wing-coverts, small patch on the side, under the wing, and edge of shoulder deep cinnamon. Iris red-brown; bill, legs, and feet black. Stomach contained berries of the banian, swallowed whole, no insect-remains whatever.

Our next prize is the nest and eggs of the Greca Dove (*Drepanoptila holosericea*), found by L. L. in the high ranges near the "Cardinal's Hat" mountain, not far from Noumea. The nest, a pretty thick structure of small sticks, was placed in a lowish tree, on a tangled mass of creepers; we could look right down on to it from the path along the steep mountain-side. The eggs, two in number, are of a pale nankeen-white (not a *pure* white), and similar at both ends.

A young friend who collected for us some time since round Noumea, informs us that lately, while in the mountain ranges near Moindu, he saw a small green Parrakeet in some numbers; he describes it as not unlike *Trichoglossus palmarum* in size and colour. This must be an unrecognized species to the New-Caledonian list.

Though neither New-Caledonian nor New-Hebridean, we take this opportunity of adding a little information on Norfolk-Island birds that has come to hand.

From our kind correspondent there we have received the eggs of *Merula poliocephala*, which much resemble some forms of the European species, being of a greenish white, profusely speckled and blotched throughout with reddish brown and faint purple markings. Axis 14 lines, diameter 10. The nest, also sent, is identical with that of the European bird, being formed of rootlets, bents of dried grasses, dried leaves, and such like; there is no special lining; interior diameter 5 inches, depth 2. From the label on the box it appears to have been found in a cave.

My kind friend also sends eggs of "the Kingfisher" and the "Whale-bird," but without the parent birds. The former are, with the exception of being white, unlike those of any other Kingfisher with which we are acquainted. The

eggs of the "Whale-bird" show it to be some species of Tern.

Additional specimens of a small form of *Platyercus penanti* of Norfolk Island have also been sent. They confirm the opinion which we had previously entertained of the necessity of distinguishing this local race by a name which at once fixes the habitat*.

E. L. & E. L. C. LAYARD.

SIRS,—The following particulars relative to the breeding of the Flamingo (*Phœnicopterus antiquorum*) in the Lake of Tunis, in 1880, may interest your readers.

On the 3rd of May, as nearly as I can recollect, I started at 12.30 A.M., with Giuseppe and Victor Emmanuele, two Sicilian cacciatori, for the island of Chikli, in the Lake of Tunis. Here we anchored the felucca for a short time, and proceeded to stalk some Flamingos which were sleeping in the shallow pools with which the island abounds. Though I was told they bred here, I failed to find any nests, though the eyries of Storks, Herons, and Cormorants abounded. After varying sport, we quitted the island about 4 A.M., when it was getting light. Giuseppe steered the boat to the southern or right-hand side of the lake. In the marshes skirting the shore he informed me I should find many Flamingos breeding. The Esparto grass grew abundantly in certain spots; and about these numbers of Flamingos were standing. We were not able to land, on account of the shallowness of the water, and the thick and viscous mud, out of which, if a boat once gets stranded, it is difficult to float her. At length there was an opening in the reeds, and Giuseppe, directing my attention to an islet of mud, told me there were two Flamingos sitting. I took up my opera-glass and saw on two mounds, some foot and a half high, two Flamingos sitting, *with their legs under them*. Of this I am certain; I could see the tarsi protruding beyond the loose plumes of the wings, just as I have seen in Flamingos in my possession, when they have

* [Messrs. Layard have not yet sent us examples of this supposed new species for comparison.—H. B. T.]

reposed on straw. I approached the nests as near as I possibly could, and the Flamingos, taking fright, flew off. There was no sign of eggs, though a Flamingo egg (of a dirty whity-brown colour) was afterwards procured from the same locality. The nests seemed to be mounds of black mud, scraped up from the surrounding ground. Reeds were sticking out of them in all directions, apparently without design. The appearance of the nests suggested to me that the Flamingo had crushed and trodden down the low-growing reeds and piled wet mud on them. The tame Flamingos I was keeping in my garden at the same time were always scraping up dirt with their feet, and dragging it about. I intended to return to the same spot the following day, and pursue my investigations; but, unfortunately, this part of the lake is very unhealthy, and the night and morning I had passed on its fetid waters had inoculated me with the Morah fever, of which I had so severe a bout that I was obliged to return to England as soon as I was convalescent.

I am told that Flamingos breed not only on the Lake of Tunis but on that of Bizerta, in the north of the Regency, and on the brackish lakes in the extreme south, near Gaks and the Sahara.

Much information may be procured from Mme. Elisa Noël, Rue Lidi Morgiani, Tunis, who is a dealer in and exporter of water-birds.

I am, Sirs, yours, &c.,

H. H. JOHNSTON.

Zoological Society's Gardens, Regent's Park,
London, N.W., December 1st, 1880.

SIRS,—As many of the readers of 'The Ibis' probably already know, and as I have incidentally stated above (p. 2), I am now engaged in the completion of the unfinished work left by the late Prof. Garrod on the Anatomy of Birds. Thanks to the stores of specimens accumulated by him, and my prosectorial advantages, I have in my possession (or, at all events, have prospectively) specimens in the flesh of nearly all of the most important forms of birds.

There are, however, still left a considerable number of which I have not as yet succeeded in obtaining any examples; and of these I append a list. It is naturally my wish to make the 'Anatomy of Birds' as complete as possible, and to examine, for that purpose, as many forms of birds as can be obtained. I hope, therefore, that any members of the B. O. U., or travellers or naturalists generally, who may have it in their power to obtain specimens of any of these my "desiderata," will do all they can to enable me to acquire these forms.

PASSERES.—In this group of birds there is so much uniformity in anatomical structure that my desiderata are comparatively few, and mostly confined to some of the more obscure forms and to the *Mesomyodæ*. I may mention the following as being desirable:—

Of the Old-world forms, EURYLÆMIDÆ, especially *Corydon* and *Calyptomena*; *Philepitta*; *Hydronis* and *Melampitta*; *Orthonyx* (particularly wanted); *Atrichia*; *Climacteris*, *Sittella*, *Xenicus*, *Acanthisitta*; *Drepanis*, or any of its allies (*Psittirostra* &c.); *Grallina*; *Drymodes*, *Psophodes*, *Petræca*; *Eupetes*; *Irena* and any *Dicruridæ*; *Euryceros*; *Falculia* and *Buphaga*.

Of American forms, *Chamæa*; *Procnias* and *Pipridea*; also any of the Mesomyodian (Formicarioid) groups, especially *Phytotoma* and *Oxyrhamphus*, both particularly wanted, and any of the larger Cotingine forms, such as *Ptilochloris*, *Cephalopterus*, *Gymnoderus*, *Querula*, *Phænicocercus*, &c.

BUCCONIDÆ. This is the only group of birds, of any size, of which I have as yet been utterly unable to procure spirit-specimens. Any will be therefore most acceptable.

MEROPIDÆ, GALBULIDÆ, and TROGONIDÆ. Any species will be acceptable, particularly any of the Old-world Trogons.

CORACIIDÆ. *Eurystomus* and any of the anomalous Madagascar forms (*Atelornis*, *Brachypteracias*, &c.).

ALCEDINIDÆ. Almost any except *Alcedo*, *Dacelo*, and *Ceryle*.

UPUPIDÆ. Any, especially *Irrisor*. (It is uncertain whether it really belongs here.)

CYPSELIDÆ. Any.

TROCHILIDÆ. Any large form, especially *Patagona*.

CAPRIMULGIDÆ. *Batrachostomus*, *Ægotheles*, *Podager*, *Nyctibius*, and almost any others.

PICIDÆ. Any except the three commoner English species. *Sphyrapicus* I particularly want; also *Picumnus*, *Vivia*, and *Sasia*.

CAPITONIDÆ. Any except *Megalama*.

CUCULIDÆ. Nearly any forms, especially *Phœnicophæes*, *Scythrops*, *Centropus*, and *Coua*.

PSITTACIDÆ. In this group nearly the only forms required are *Cyclopsitta* and *Pezoporus*. Young nestlings of *Stringops* (the younger the better, or even well-incubated eggs) would also be very interesting.

GALLINÆ. *Oreophasis*, *Agelastus* and *Phasidus*, *Leipoa*, and *Megapodius* are my chief desiderata here.

COLUMBIDÆ. Here also my wants are few; any species of *Carpophaga* and *Ptilopus* would be welcome; also *Otidiphaps*, if it can be got!

TUBINARES. Any species will be very acceptable, as I am engaged on a memoir on the anatomy of the group for the voyage of H.M.S. 'Challenger.'

In the remaining groups the following genera are still very imperfectly, or not at all, known anatomically; all present special features of interest:—

Platalea (except *P. leucorodia* and *ajaja*), *Anastomus*, *Balæniceps*, *Esacus*, *Mergulus*, *Phaleris*, &c., *Plotus* (exc. *P. anhinga*), *Thinocorus*, *Mesites*, and *Attagis*; also the TURNICIDÆ—*Pedionomus* (particularly wanted); *Rhynchæa*, *Ibidorhynchus*, *Tachydromus*, *Pterocnemis* (= *Rhea darwinii*), *Tinamotis* and *Calodromas* (both particularly wanted; the latter, at least, ought to be obtainable); *Parra* and *Hydrophasianus*, *Heliornis* and *Podica*, *Dromas*, *Rhynchops*, and *Palamedea* (not *Chauna*).

It is also greatly to be desired that the osteology and anatomy of the lately discovered short-winged Rails of the genera *Megacrex* and *Pennula* should be properly examined before they become (as they almost certainly will shortly) extinct.

I may remark that any tolerably strong spirit will do to preserve birds in, but that it will be better, especially in the case of larger birds, to change it two or three times during the first few days that the birds remain in spirit. All that is necessary in the way of preparation is to open the abdominal cavity by a slit down the median line, so as to allow the spirit access to the *viscera*. The viscera should *not* be removed in any case.

In default of spirit-specimens, carbolized ones, or skeletons of many of the forms mentioned would be useful; but spirit-specimens in all cases are to be preferred. The specimens need not, of course, be in good plumage; and the wing and tail-feathers, and even others, can be cut short to save space. But, unless the birds are named, enough of the feathers should always be left on to secure identification.

I may add that I shall be very grateful if some of the many ornithologists resident in India would procure me about half a dozen specimens (adult) of wild-shot *Gallus bankiva*, in spirits, or even skeletons. As the first part of Prof. Garrod's treatise is devoted to the anatomy of the Fowl, it is desirable to have wild specimens of it for dissection, or at least to describe the bones from them, and not from any of our domestic races.

W. A. FORBES.

The College, Durham,
Dec. 4, 1880.

SIRS,—I had been making inquiries as to the birds found on St. Ambrose Island, in the South Pacific, off the coast of Peru, which is rarely visited. I had some hope that something like the fauna of the Galapagos might occur there.

I hear from a friend who has recently visited it, that there are no land-birds. The only birds procured were specimens of *Æstrelata defilippiana* and *Anous cæruleus*. Of these Lieut. Gunn, R.N., my correspondent, has sent me specimens, together with the eggs of the former.

Yours &c.,
H. B. TRISTRAM.

Obituary.—Mr. T. C. EYTON. We regret to have to chronicle the death of one of the original members of this Union. Mr. Thomas Campbell Eyton, of Eyton, and Walford Manor, Shropshire, died at his residence, near Wellington, Shropshire, at the end of October last. Mr. Eyton was the eldest son of the late Mr. Thomas Eyton, of Eyton, by his marriage with Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Major-General Donald Campbell, and was born in the year 1809. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, was a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for the county of Salop, and formerly held a commission in the South Salop Yeomanry Cavalry. He was a member of the Linnean, Geological, and Zoological Societies. His museum at Eyton Hall contains a large collection of birds and bird-skeletons, of which, we believe, the types and more important specimens will go to the British Museum. Mr. Eyton's name is well known to ornithologists as the author of the 'History of the rarer British Birds' (1836), the 'Monograph of the Duck tribe' (1838), the 'Osteologia Avium' (1861), and other works and papers.

The Range of Porphyrio cæruleus.—In my note on the name of the Purple Waterhen of South-western Europe (*Ibis*, 1879, p. 195), I speak of that species as "restricted to Spain and Algeria." This is not quite correct, as it certainly also occurs in Sardinia, whence Prof. Giglioli has kindly supplied me with a specimen, killed in the marshes near Cagliari in October 1877. Prof. Giglioli also assures me that it is met with, though rarely, in Sicily, whence he has likewise received examples.—P. L. SCLATER.

Prejevalsky's last Expedition.—Col. Prejevalsky is expected to arrive shortly in St. Petersburg from his last expedition. The collections he brings with him are stated to comprise 2000 specimens of birds; so that there is every reason to expect a great advance in our knowledge of the ornithology of Tartary and Tibet.

The new Otidiphaps.—Count Salvadori kindly informs us that the new Pigeon described in 'The Ibis' for July last (1880, p. 364) as *Otidiphaps regalis* has also been named by

Mr. Ramsay, of Sydney, *Otidiphaps nobilis*, var. *cervicalis*, in a paper read before the Linnean Society of New South Wales on December 31st, 1879, which name is subsequently, in the same paper, altered to *O. cervicalis*. Mr. Ramsay has not yet favoured us with a copy of this paper, nor has the fourth part of the journal in question for 1879 (which would, we suppose, contain Mr. Ramsay's article), so far as we know, been anywhere received in this country. It is therefore not possible for us to give the exact date of its publication.

Note on Chlorophonia cyanodorsalis.—Graf v. Berlepsch sends us the following extract from a letter from M. Alph. Dubois, of the Royal Museum of Brussels, in reply to his inquiries concerning that problematical species *Chlorophonia cyanodorsalis*, Dubois, Rev. de Zool. 1859, p. 49, t. 2:—

“Pour ce qui regarde le *Chloroph. cyanodorsalis*, je ne puis vous donner aucun renseignement. Ce n'est pas moi, mais feu moi père qui a décrit et figuré cet oiseau. Je ne sais ce que son type est devenu; car peu de temps avant sa mort il a vendu sa collection à un amateur étranger que je ne connais pas. Je suis également d'avis que cet oiseau n'est qu'une variété accidentelle de *l'occipitalis*.”

The Birds of Socotra.—The birds' skins obtained in Socotra by Prof. Balfour in February last year have been determined by Selater and Dr. Hartlaub. Their report on the subject will be read before the Zoological Society on the 18th inst. Examples of thirty-four species are in the collection, of which seven appear to be new. The remainder are mostly well-known East-African forms.

Works in preparation.—Mr. Dresser, having completed his 'Birds of Europe,' has in contemplation a companion work on the birds of the eastern half of the Palearctic Region, and a monograph of the Meropidæ. For the latter many of the plates, by Mr. Keulemans, are, we understand, already drawn. The next three volumes of the British-Museum Catalogues of Birds to be issued are the Turdidæ and Sylviidæ, by Mr. Seebohm; the Timeliidæ, by Mr. Sharpe;

and the Laniidæ and Paridæ by Dr. Gadow, whom we are glad to welcome to England to aid us in our ornithological labours. Mr. Gould, it is stated, has in progress a volume of illustrations of the genus *Pitta*.

Expeditions in progress and projected.—From our Foreign Member, Dr. Finsch, we have just received a *seventh* ornithological letter, which will be given in our next number. He is now in Matupi Island, Blanche Bay, New Britain, where he will probably remain some time. Our excellent Secretary, Mr. F. DuCane Godman, is away with Mr. Elwes, on a trip to Sikkim, in which, although not projected with any ornithological object, birds will, no doubt, not be lost sight of. Canon Tristram will leave England very shortly, in conduct of a learned party, for Palestine, where again, although ornithology is but a subordinate object, we may be quite sure that our energetic coadjutor will not fail to note every bird that he comes across. Later in the spring, Canon Tristram will make an excursion into Eastern Syria and the valley of the Upper Euphrates, where he expects to be just in time to find *Geronticus calvus* breeding*, and will, no doubt, meet with other rare birds. Professor Balfour, who has so successfully explored Socotra, is now meditating an expedition into the interior of Arabia from Aden, in company with Capt. Hunter, the Assistant Political Resident at that port. Professor Balfour's main object will of course be the plants; but he is endeavouring to make arrangements to take a zoological collector with him into this unknown and highly interesting district. Major Biddulph, whose excellent notes on the Birds of Gilgit we give in this number, has returned again to that very dangerous station, only to be besieged, it seems, by the unruly natives. Now that order is restored, he will be able to resume his most interesting ornithological observations. Mr. W. A. Forbes has, as many of our readers know, returned safely from his trip to Pernambuco, and promises us an account of his adventures for our next number.

* Cf. Ibis, 1880, p. 88.